

Shaping and Directing Our Chiropractic Future

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You may ask yourself, 'How did I get here?' - David Byrne

How did the chiropractic profession get to where we are now?

What or who will determine where we go next?

Can you influence our direction, or are you just subject to the whims of others?

If you've been in the chiropractic profession for more than a few years, you've seen various leaders come and go: most seem to rise to power, become burned out and fade away. This observation may give you the impression that it is the long-standing leaders that hold down a few of the top positions that dictate where we go and what we do.

This is not necessarily the reality.

While a few positions are key, such as presidents of national and state chiropractic associations, and members of various chiropractic organizations, etc., there are many people who make quite significant contributions, yet generally go unnoticed.

When chiropractic began, over 100 years ago, there were of course few members of the profession. In the infancy of our first 40-50 years, there were, however, a few great leaders with many ardent supporters. But today's chiropractic profession is more diverse. Our progress and direction are built upon the sacrifice and service of thousands of doctors and lay people.

Take a look at some of our chiropractic organizations. We have:

- 33 chiropractic colleges;
- over 60 national chiropractic association worldwide;
- over 60 chiropractic state associations in the U.S., many with local societies;
- 12 provincial chiropractic associations in Canada, and eight in Australia;
- numerous other state and provincial chiropractic associations and societies in other countries;
- 63 chiropractic licensing boards in the U.S. and Canada;
- several thousand companies providing products and services for doctors and their patients, most of whom have very strong commitments and make major contributions to the profession; and
- various other groups and organizations, including alumni organizations, technique associations, common interest groups, etc.

All of these groups have officers, board members, staff and members/clients that contribute to the direction of their organizations, and ultimately the chiropractic profession itself.

Our profession has expanded, and so has the number of organizations needed to meet our challenges, and the number of people required to serve those organizations. And while we can

expect this trend to continue, the question quickly comes to mind:

How much energy is spent moving forward, and how much is spent fighting for the driver's seat?

Like several hundred ants working in concert to move an object, we must begin to realize that our individual progress is most often dependant on our corporate efforts. The opportunities that present themselves do so based upon the greatness of chiropractic, not the personal accomplishments of any one individual or organization.

This reality has not been historically embraced. Limited success has caused our pride to convince us that we can do it better individually. And while cooperation has usually eluded our profession, our inability to work together will be the source of greater penalties and restriction.

So, to answer the questions at the beginning of this article:

We got here through the hard work and sacrifice of many.

We go forward through the efforts of many more.

We go in the direction that those who contribute want to take us.

You do influence our direction by speaking out and becoming part of what's happening.

Or...you can let others decide for you.

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